

Good Morning friends, today is mothering Sunday, and having led worship, for over 35 years, this is the first time, I can recollect, not gathering, with the church family, on this day. But gather, we do, on a day, that will be difficult, for many of us, perhaps because, we are unable to visit our parents, because of the Corvid19 virus, or because, like myself our parents, are no longer with us. Again it is not an easy day, for those who perhaps, do not have children, either by choice, or because of one reason or another, and through no fault of their own, they are unable to.

For, as some of you, may already know, my wife Jane and I, had our own problems, when it came, to having a family, and after some sorrows, over a number of years, we were eventually, blessed, with a daughter Naomi, and a son, Jacob. My children are now 24 and 21, and some kind person, advised me, early on, that it's only, the first 26 years, that are hard, after that it, gets easier !! Thanks dad !!

My friends, being a parent, isn't easy. And if anyone, had told me, or offered, a job description, I might well, have asked, for better pay... only kidding.

**And so on this Mothering Sunday**, I'd like, to share a few thoughts, with you, on the job, of being a mother, **Although**, it should be said, that much of what, I say, relates to fathers, as well... well hopefully, anyway.

Now, a Mother's job, is to watch over, nourish, and protect, their child, and in many ways, this job starts, the day, she finds she out, that she is pregnant. Then, when the baby, has arrived, a Mother, is the chief, night watchman, for her ear, is fine-tuned, to hear, the slightest turn, of a baby, in the bed, a light whimper, and immediately, **she or he**, depending, on whose turn it is, is out of, that bed, and straight, to the baby's cot !

I still remember listening at night, for Naomi and Jacob, and sometimes standing, outside, their door, for a minute or five, or creeping in, to make sure, they were OK.

Again, a Mother, is the Doctor, and Nurse, all rolled into one. If it's a fever, a crying baby, that won't be quiet, a cut, a loose tooth – it doesn't matter. Mums knows, how to fix it ! Often, a Mother needs only, to kiss the 'bad boo-boo' and offer reassurance, and the child, is instantly calmed, of all fears. After all, as my, mum would say, within earshot, of my dad, Mother, knows best !

Again, mums, are often, the taxi, bus driver, and chauffeur, all rolled in to one - whatever it takes, to get the child, to, to... well well, wherever they need to go.

Which leads me on, to the role, of planner, organiser and time keeper. After all, children, don't watch the clock; they listen to Mum. So mum knows, when the bus, runs for school, the time for ballet, rugby practice, the piano lesson, swimming lesson, the school play, dentist etc etc. Whatever, has a time attached, be assured, that more often, than not, a Mother, has the TIME, somewhere, in her diary, on her phone, in her purse or in her head !

Or OR, and trust me on this, it's written down, on the calendar, or on a piece of paper, attached to the refrigerator, the bathroom mirror, the car steering wheel, or some place, that she's bound, to see it, or be able, to find it, in case, of a lapse in memory !

Again, more often than not, a Mum, is the chief cook, and bottle washer, as well as, a domestic technician. Offering 1<sup>st</sup> class, room service, and trust me, this lasts, right up until, they leave home. In fact, with some ( I have heard) it never ends !!

A Mum, is also a COUNSELOR, for the teens and beyond. She is always, willing, to listens, to all the problems, and then tries, to solve them. For a Mother, is also a CONSOLER. For she listens, while they tell her, that nobody, wants to be my friend, or the teachers don't like me, or that 'nobody loves me', or 'my girlfriend / boyfriend has dumped me', etc etc

Again, this role, goes beyond, the early years and the teens, right into marriage, with, 'the baby doesn't sleep at night', to 'the kids are just so tiring, frustrating, untidy etc etc'. Yes a Mother, is such a great consoler, in this area, why ? WHY ? Well, she's been there, and done that ! Because, because, you were like that 😊

Friends as parents, we try to be, a shoulder, and a listening ear, for our children, it's not easy, trust me, but, BUT we need to listen. Sometimes, we have an answer, and sometimes, well we don't, and all, all we can do, is just be there, for them. And for me, that's the most important thing, of all.

Again, a Mum, is the referee, in every dispute. NEWSFLASH, siblings, don't always get on !! Been, there, seen that, and as father, have hidden, and let mum, sort it out.

A Mum is also, chief cheer person, and coach, often found, in a muddy field, offering support, and words of advice, not least to the referee, if their child, is tripped, or fouled during the game.

And lastly, although, I have not exhausted, the Job, of a mother, and the roles of a parent, a Mum is the light, at the end of the tunnel, the safe port, in the wake of a storm !! For She, is, Mum !

**To Conclude:** although, overworked, and underpaid, a Mum, in my experience, accepts, the blessing, of parenthood, with all, of its challenges, and does her best, to fulfil, the God given role, of being a mother. In return, I believe, God equips parents, especially mothers, with vast array, of talents, and gifts, for the job, of being a Mum.

**Finally :** In the book of proverbs chapter 31, it says this, about a mother : She is clothed with strength and dignity; she can laugh at the days to come. She speaks with wisdom, and faithful instruction, is on her tongue. She watches over, the affairs of her household. Her children arise and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praises her.

**So today, we thank God for Mums. Amen**

A Prayer

Parent God, Lord of all life,

We pray for parents of whatever age,

those who are concerned for their children,

those who are not able to go to school, or work

those who have already lost their jobs at this time.

Those who are sick in body, mind or spirit, at home or in hospital.

Help them to know, that You care about them and their children.

In silence let us bring our own prayers

Gracious God, You love us like a parent;

Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer**

Parent God, Lord of all life,  
Today we pray for our world, our nation,  
That you would give wisdom, to our leaders, and governments at this time,  
That your spirit would inspire them,  
and those who serve you at this time of need.  
We pray for those who work in the medical profession,  
doctors and nurses, carers, and all those who work, in hospitals  
and care homes at this time.  
And we pray especially for scientists,  
as they seek for an answer to this virus.  
Gracious God, You love us like a parent;  
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer**

Parent God, Lord of all life,  
On this day, we call to mind our own memories,  
Of our mothers and fathers,  
Or of those who cared for us like a mother or father,  
Or we remember times with children.  
For many of us, these will be happy memories.  
Others may have memories that are more difficult.  
Whichever they may be,  
Let us offer them to God now,  
Entrusting them into His hands.  
Gracious God, You love us like a parent;  
Lord in your mercy - **hear our prayer**

Parent God, Lord of all life,  
We thank You that Your love for us  
Is like that of a loving parent.  
Help us to offer that same caring love,  
As individuals and as a church,  
That those, we know and pray for today,  
may be wrapped in Your loving care.  
In Jesus name we pray.

**Amen**

And now the **The Lord's Prayer**

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy Name;  
thy kingdom come; thy will be done; on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

And so may the blessing and peace of God,  
Father, Son and Holy Spirit,  
be with you and those you love,  
this day and always Amen.